

2020

Annual Report Summary



Eau Claire City-County
Health Department

720 Second Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54703

www.echealthdepartment.org



Message From the Health Officer

I am proud to share with you the 2020 Eau Claire City-County Health Department Annual Report Summary. The stories in this report highlight a few of the many public health issues we addressed this year, in addition to our ongoing response efforts for COVID-19. 2020 was a busy and challenging year for the health department as we focused on a broad range of emerging and ongoing public health issues! These included:

- COVID-19
- Safe and affordable housing for all community members
- Drug misuse prevention including opioids and vaping
- Safe water
- Chronic Disease work around heart health and diabetes awareness

As I reflect on this last year, I am grateful for our dedicated health department team here and all our community partners, whose hard work and commitment were critical to our successes this last year. Thank you for your continued support of the work we do to promote health and safety for all communities in Eau Claire County.

We look forward to working with all of you in the next year as we continue to work on these and other important public health topics. We will continue to strive to meet the needs of all that live, work, learn, vacation, play, and spend time here. The health department recognizes that there are challenges and opportunities in the year ahead and is positioned well to be strategic in addressing these. In 2021, the health department will work to incorporate health in all policies, continue working on Racism as public health issue, and will continue to be a leader in the state on water issues. The health department will also continue to address the challenges of drug and alcohol misuse, chronic disease, healthy babies, mental health, homelessness, affordable housing, and public health emergency preparedness. Let me know how we can continue to improve all the work we do here at the Health Department.

Respectfully,



Lieske (Elizabeth) Giese
Health Officer-Director
Eau Claire City-County Health Department



Health Department Overview

Mission

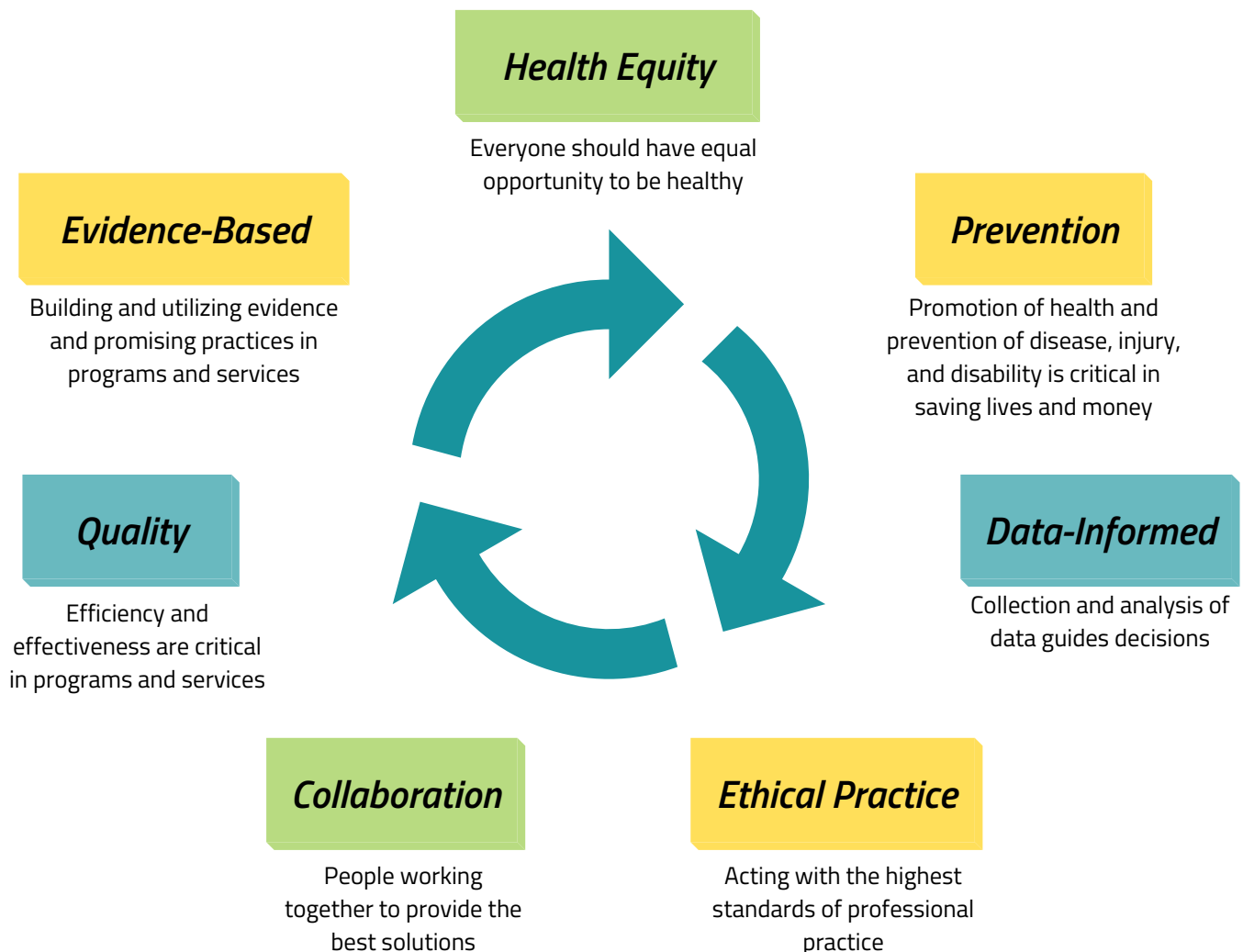
Promoting health and safety for all Eau Claire communities

Vision

Eau Claire City-County Health Department will be a leader in assuring healthy people in healthy communities

Guiding Principles

Seven overarching principles guide the work of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department:



Meet Our Managers

Assistant Director



Marisa Stanley

Environmental Sciences



Matt Steinbach

Community Health Promotion



Denise Wirth

Healthy Beginnings



Elizabeth Draeger

Regulation & Licensing



Jeff Robb

Operations and
Clinical Services (acting)



Tegan Ruland

Communicable Disease



Paulette Magur

Policy & Systems



Cortney Draxler

Eau Claire City-County Board of Health

The Eau Claire City-County Board of Health (BOH) is an eight-member board appointed by the County Board and City Council. The BOH advocates for reasonable and necessary public health services. They also provide leadership that fosters local involvement and commitment. The BOH is made up of: a City Council member, a County Board member, two practicing physicians, one practicing dentist, one registered nurse, and two community representatives.

Members:

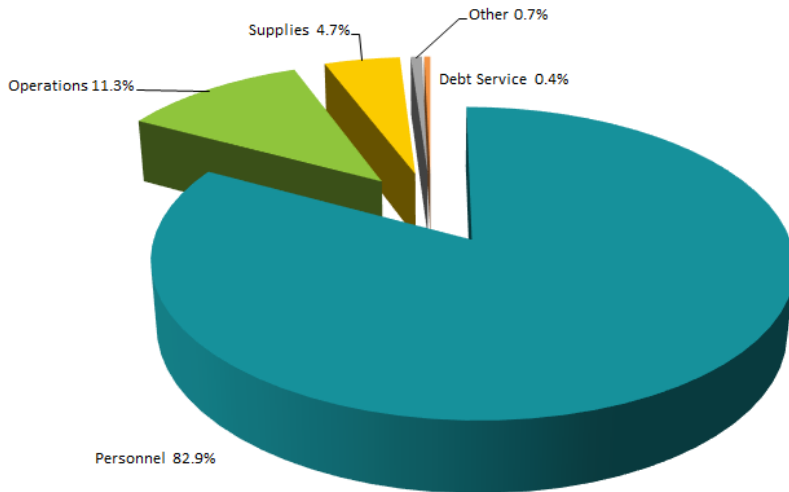
Emily Berge - City Council
Jennifer Eddy, MD
Terry Miskulin, DDS
Merey Price, RN
Kari Stuede (outgoing)*

Donald Bodeau, MD
Mark Kaeding (incoming)*
Martha Nieman - County Board
Elizabeth Spencer (outgoing)*
True Vue (incoming)*

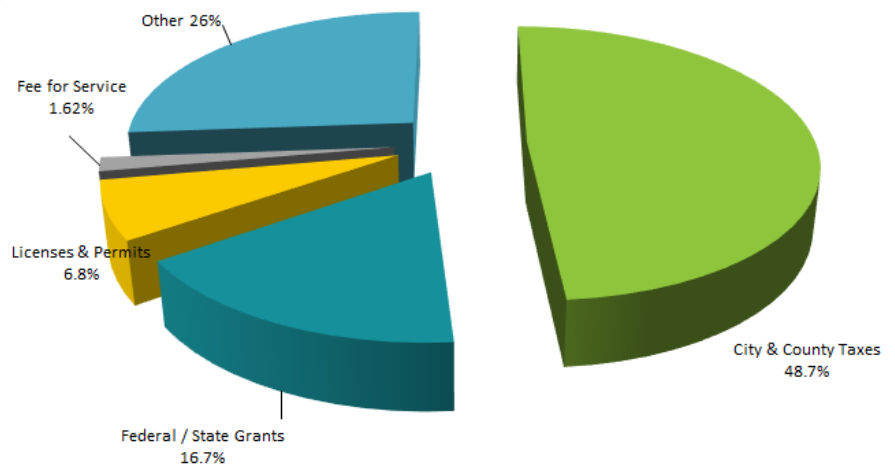
2020 Budget

Here is a general review of the 2020 Eau Claire City-County Health Department budget. We are proud of our remarkable staff and the amazing work they do. In fact, staff represent the largest and one of the most important expenses we have. This staff strives to acquire diverse funders to support health department work.

2020 Estimated Expenses



2020 Estimated Revenues



Operations Division

The Operations Division provides leadership, support, and oversight of operational capacity for all divisions, including areas of human resources, finance, and technical support. This team works hard to keep the health department organized and functioning efficiently to best serve the community.



Local Health Data

Data provides an overview of the health of our community and can show how health is influenced by many factors. This includes our everyday surroundings - where we live, learn, work, and play. Accurate data helps us to:

- Identify and understand current and potential health problems or environmental public health
- Provide reliable health information to community partners hazards
- Evaluate if our programs, policy changes, and environmental changes are making a difference

Eau Claire County By The Numbers

104,646

Eau Claire County
Population
(Census)

\$59,476

Median Household
Income (Census)

10.6%

Persons Living in
Poverty (Census)

23%

Eau Claire County
Residents Living in
Rural Areas (Co
Health Rankings)

79.5

Average Years
Expected To Live
(Co Health
Rankings)

9%

Population is African
American, Asian,
American
Indian/Alaskan Native,
Hispanic, or Native
Hawaiian/Other Pacific
Islander (Census)

39%

Households in
Poverty or Qualify as
ALICE (Asset Limited,
Income Constrained,
Employed)
(United Way)

\$12,140

Household Costs
for Single Adult
(United Way)

616

Seasonal Flu Shots
Administered

Learn how we are protecting
the public from spread of
disease on [page 6](#)

59

Pap Smears

Learn how our Family
Planning Clinic has improved
on [page 8](#)

1,078

NFP Telehealth
Visits

Learn how we are providing
for families on [page 10](#)

1,390

Housing
Inspections

Learn how we are keeping
housing safe on [page 11](#)

Communicable Disease Division

Provides essential services to prevent and control communicable disease outbreaks and prepares public health emergency response activities.

Filling Gaps to Protect Community Health

The communicable disease team works hard to keep you safe from illnesses like influenza (flu), tuberculosis (TB), and many others in a typical year. This year we added SARS-CoV-2, popularly known as COVID-19. The team is committed to preventing disease outbreaks by continuously collecting and reviewing data on disease exposure, monitoring disease outbreaks when they occur, and following up with individuals who have been exposed to make sure they are receiving care and not spreading the disease to others.

The communicable disease team focuses on health equity and assurance, meaning that anyone who has trouble accessing a flu vaccine, thermometer, or mask can receive one from the health department. For example, the team supported several volunteers throughout 2020 who delivered free masks and thermometers to people who otherwise would not have access to them. They also sponsored multiple drive-thru vaccine clinics to distribute influenza vaccines to children and adults. By utilizing a drive-through model for vaccine distribution for influenza early in the year, the communicable disease team was able to distribute shots quickly and safely without requiring recipients to leave their cars, and provided health department staff an opportunity to practice a drive-through model for future COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

Communicable Disease by the Numbers

IMMUNIZATIONS
ADMINISTERED
(NON-COVID)

1,070

SEASONAL FLU
SHOTS
ADMINISTERED

616

FOLLOWED UP ON
REPORTED
COMMUNICABLE
DISEASES CASES
(NON-COVID)

849



Clinical Services Division

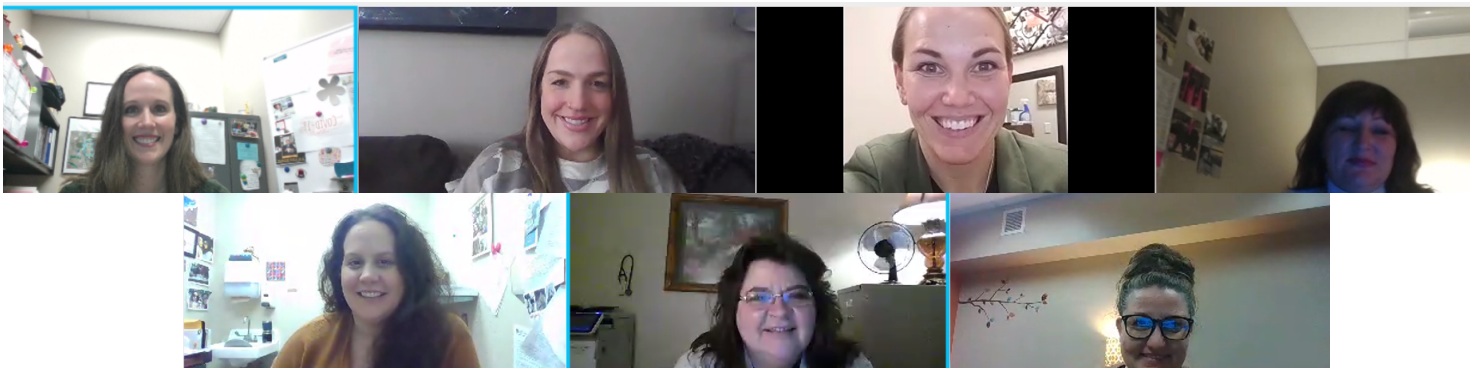
Provides quality reproductive health services, including testing and treatment of diseases and infections. The division also provides education to raise community awareness of less risky sexual behavior.

Expanding Telehealth Visits

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Family Planning Clinic (FPC) team began offering virtual telehealth visits so patients could receive family planning services without visiting the clinic in-person. This helped prevent the spread of infectious disease between visitors and staff, and for some patients made appointments more easily accessible by eliminating travel time to and from the clinic. We were able to continue to provide basic essential services related to pregnancy prevention and reproductive health.

Shared Nurse Practitioner Model

Beginning in 2019, the Eau Claire City-County, Pepin County, Pierce County, St. Croix County and Dunn County health departments collaborated to develop a shared service model for family planning nurse practitioner (FPNP) services. In 2020, we hired a Nurse Practitioner and began working within this innovative partnership arrangement to support high-quality, accessible and sustainable nurse practitioner services across all five counties. Even with the COVID-19 response taking a high priority, all five counties were able to continue providing family planning services to populations that may otherwise not have access during the year.



Clinical Services By The Numbers

LONG-ACTING
REVERSIBLE
CONTRACEPTION

26

TOTAL VISITS

804

CHLAMYDIA
CASES

369

SEXUALLY
TRANSMITTED
INFECTION
SCREENINGS

556

Community Health Promotion Division

Works collaboratively with partners to identify and address strategies to improve community health where we live, work, and play.

Sharing Tools to Fight Chronic Disease

The community health promotion team aims to reduce the burden of chronic disease in Eau Claire County by providing resources and education covering topics like type II diabetes prevention, healthy lifestyle habits, adult nutrition, and more. This year, the team distributed healthy lifestyle supplies such as orange peelers, water bottles, measuring spoons, and exercise resistance bands at local farmers' markets. The team also successfully partnered with community agencies like Hope Gospel Mission, the Lion's Club, and the L.E. Philips Memorial Public Library to distribute chronic disease prevention kits and information on heart health and exercise to those experiencing homelessness and poverty. Additionally, the team promoted available resources through media interviews, press releases, print articles, and social media posts.

Creating a Substance-Free Community

Reducing the prevalence of vaping and commercial tobacco consumption remained a community health priority in 2020. The community health promotion team successfully completed 21 tobacco compliance checks to ensure that tobacco products were not being illegally sold by retailers to youth under the age of 21. All retailers checked by the Health Department followed federal law by checking customer IDs at the time of purchase and declining to sell tobacco products to those under age 21. The community health promotion team provided resources to local entities, such as the City of Eau Claire, to provide guidance to add vaping and e-cigarette products to their smoke-free indoor air ordinances.

Community Health Promotion by The Numbers

ON-SITE FARMER'S MARKETS

14

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION KITS

265

TOBACCO COMPLIANCE CHECKS

21



Healthy Beginnings Division

Provides a wide variety of individual and family services that positively impact the health of our community, specifically the maternal and child health population.

Here for You, No Matter What

In 2020, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced several WIC program flexibilities to ensure that nutritionally at-risk families could continue receiving nutrition assistance and other benefits throughout the pandemic. For the first time, Eau Claire County WIC families were able to be approved for benefits and attend appointments virtually without making an in-person office visit. For some participants, this made attending WIC appointments easier by eliminating the need to take time off from work or use transportation to and from appointments.

The average monthly caseload increased by 3.89%, for an average of 56 new families now obtaining WIC services in Eau Claire County. WIC is proud to serve families in need of nutrition assistance, breastfeeding support and more, and are committed to providing high-quality nutritional services to families in the year to come.

Keeping Families Connected

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) program transitioned all appointments to telehealth visits in order to meet pregnant women and young family needs and prevent disease spread. During this time, the NFP National Service Office identified the critical need for nurses to remain in contact with their clients. NFP contracted with Verizon to provide 22 clients with a cell phone and cell phone plan. This helped NFP nurses stay in touch with clients in addition to their Covid-19 response duties and allowed clients to participate in the program without in-person visits.

Healthy Beginnings By The Numbers

WIC MONTHLY
FAMILY ANVERAGE
INCREASE

56

NFP TELEHEALTH
VISITS

1,078

CAR SEATS GIVEN &
INSTALLED

34

CRIBS AND
PACK&PLAYS
GIVEN

19



Environmental Science Division

Provides programs and services to enhance and protect environment quality. This division increases awareness of how environmental hazards conditions significantly influence the health and welfare of communities.

Healthy Coops in Eau Claire

The Environmental Sciences Poultry Program provides support for the City of Eau Claire ordinance that allows residents within the City of Eau Claire to safely keep poultry in some areas. The purpose of this program is to ensure that eggs are utilized for household use, that poultry are kept in safe and sanitary conditions, and that the ordinance standards are being followed. The division's involvement in the City of Eau Claire's licensing procedures, which includes education to licensees, seeks to prevent an outbreak of illness due to improper poultry handling, egg distribution, hand washing, or management of feed, waste, or sick birds. Staff have assisted in the licensing of fifteen poultry coops in the city. A city poultry license requires an application showing a thoughtful and safe plan for poultry keeping, including the intended coop design and a plan for managing waste.

Testing for Tick-Borne Illnesses

The division partnered with state and federal agencies to conduct additional testing on ticks that were collected from two rural parks in Eau Claire County in late 2019. In addition to the routine test for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacteria that can cause Lyme disease, a subset were sent to the CDC to be tested for several other pathogens that the Department's laboratory had not historically tested for. These tests revealed the presence of several other pathogens of concern, although at much lower levels than *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The result of the testing suggests that monitoring for other pathogens may be beneficial to supplement the ongoing efforts to evaluate and track the various parks for their risk of human exposure to infected ticks.

Environmental Science By The Numbers

ANIMAL
BITE/EXPOSURE
FOLLOW-UPS

120

PERMITS ISSUED
FOR WELL
INSTALLATION,
REPLACEMENT, AND
RECONNECTION

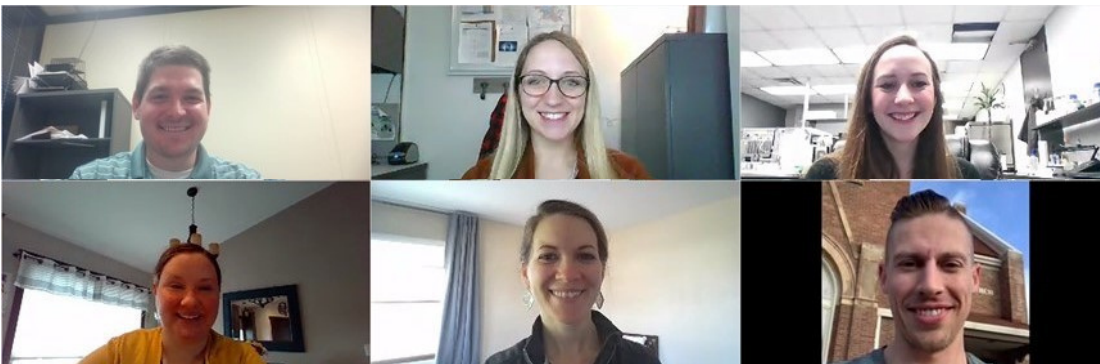
168

PERMITS ISSUED FOR
PRIVATE ON-SITE
WASTEWATER
TREATMENT SYSTEMS
(POWTS)

203

DRINKING WATER
TESTS
PERFORMED

7,043



Regulation & Licensing Division

Inspects any facility that provides necessities such as food, water, and housing to the public. This division also inspects recreational facilities and temporary event spaces.

Safer Home and Work Environments

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inspection and licensing team strategically partnered with the Chippewa Valley COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force (CVERT) to work with businesses to help inform and create safe working practices. The team distributed outreach emails, newsletters, and phone calls to keep businesses updated with changing information and guidance related to disease prevention. The team incorporated COVID-19 education into regular business and restaurant inspections, and followed up on complaints related to employees or customers not following local and state orders and community expectations.

Healthy Housing for a Healthy Life

The Housing Program works with local partners to reduce unsafe and unhealthy housing throughout Eau Claire County by inspecting interior and exterior conditions and enforcing housing codes to promote health and safety. This year, the housing inspection team focused on Maples Neighborhood, a mobile home park in the City of Eau Claire. In collaboration with residents and local partners, units in the park were inspected for health and safety, and when hazardous conditions were identified, the number of units were reduced over time to minimize displacement of residents. Eventually, the park was sold in October 2020. Our housing team worked with community partners to identify alternative housing to residents who were displaced.



Regulation & Licensing By The Numbers

RESTAURANT &
RETAIL
FACILITY
INSPECTIONS

607

POOL INSPECTIONS

56

RENTAL UNITS
REGISTERED

10,231

RENTAL
PROPERTIES
REGISTERED

3,606

PROPERTY
INSPECTIONS

1,390

Policy & Systems Division

Works closely with partners to collectively identify and communicate importance of including health in policy, system and environmental changes across the department and community.

Measuring Community Needs and Setting Priorities

Community partners from Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls came together to begin the 2020-21 Community Health Assessment process this fall. The Health Department partnered with the Chippewa County Department of Public Health, Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership, Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Marshfield Clinic, Mayo Clinic Health System, HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital, and United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley for the assessment.

The goal of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) is to learn from community members what they think the top health priorities are. The CHA also provides the Health Department and other partners an opportunity to learn about the health needs of the community, and evaluate community priorities. The first part of the CHA, an electronic survey, was distributed widely in December 2020. Paper copies were also provided to respondents, and a total of 976 Eau Claire County residents responded to the survey. In 2021 several community conversations will be held to share survey and local health data, where participants will discuss the data and vote for their top three health areas from the 14 areas listed in the survey. Results from the CHA will be used to help guide Health Department actions and mobilize the community to address health issues in the coming three years.

Top 5 Health Priorities from 2020 Community Survey

1. MENTAL HEALTH
2. DRUG USE
3. ALCOHOL MISUSE
4. OBESITY
5. HEALTHY NUTRITION

What are YOUR top health concerns in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties?
Local health partners want to know!



Partners:
Chippewa County Department of Public Health, Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership, Eau Claire City-County Health Department, Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Mayo Clinic Health System, HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital, Marshfield Clinic Health System, and United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley



COVID-19

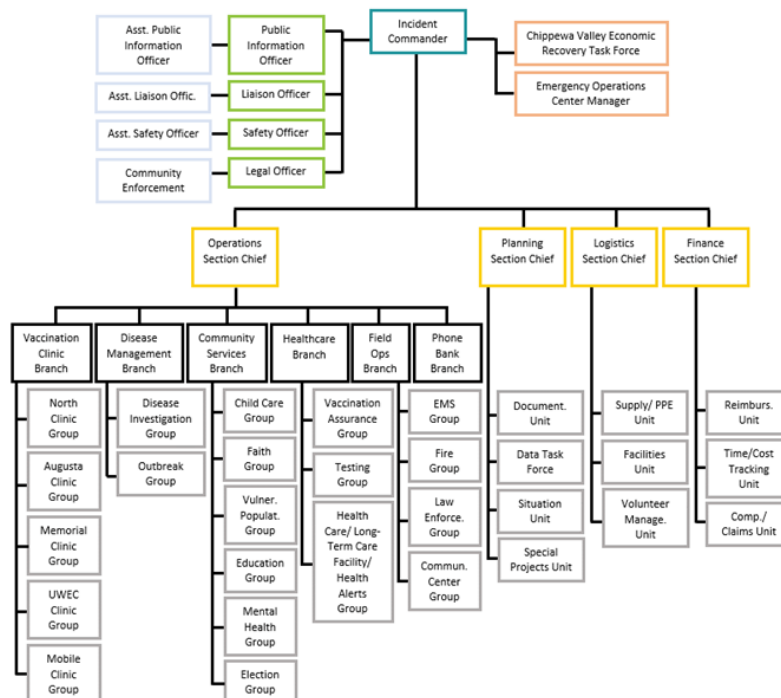
What a year! 2020 brought us new vocabulary, new experiences, and a very new awareness of public health. You may have:

- Learned the meaning of “quarantine”, “isolation”, and “socially distant”
- Discovered many ways to measure 6 feet
- Become a frequent user of curbside pickup and delivery services
- Attempted a quarantine haircut for yourself or a family member
- Participated in a virtual _ _ _ _ (wedding, bingo, trivia, holiday, concert...you fill in the blank!)

We also had a year with an unprecedented number of our residents being hospitalized & dying from a respiratory virus. There is no simple way to sum up this year. *Devastating. Challenging. Ever-changing. Exhausting.* One word we would also use is **thankful**. We are so thankful for our amazing staff and community partners who have worked countless hours to protect our community’s health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a public health department, we regularly prepare and plan for public health emergencies. As part of this preparation, on Jan 22, 2020, the Incident Command System was opened as we were hearing concerns about a possible pandemic.. (Incident command is a standard management structure with procedures for managing temporary incidents of any size). Throughout 2020, ICS was staffed primarily by Health Department staff and with additional community partners. Lieske Giese, the Health Department Director, has served as Incident Commander.

Incident Command helps to ensure efficient emergency response, with very specific roles and expectations for each role. This system has also helped us to quickly expand certain branches as needed (such as during our case surge, or when vaccinations began). This is the longest time we have EVER been working in an emergency response like this. The incident command structure ensures we have a coordinated response and clear, consistent, and accurate information for the community (see picture on right with incident command diagram).

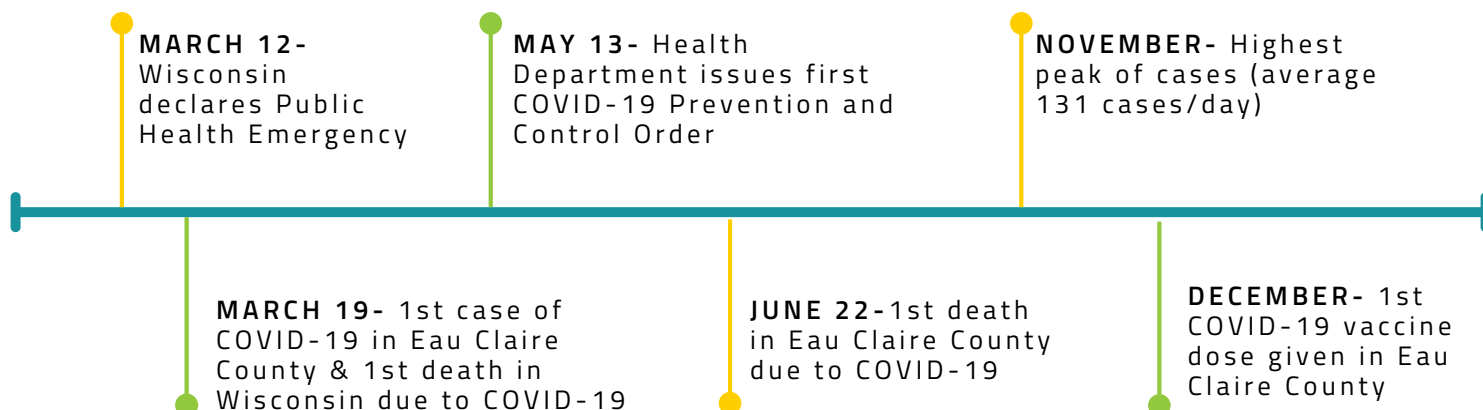


COVID-19

COVID-19 Response Accomplishments in 2020 (and the work continues in 2021)

- Eau Claire Incident Command for COVID-19 response has more than 95 people filling various Incident Command roles to ensure we are able to respond efficiently and effectively to COVID-19.
- Answered nearly 7,000 calls to our COVID-19 Call Center since it opened (March 25-December 31)
- Held 91 live COVID-19 briefings on social media to provide current information for our community and developed 72 weekly situation reports to distribute to the community and partners.
- Investigated 9,712 cases of COVID-19 and followed up with the many close contacts of those cases.
- Hired and supervised 51 additional COVID-19 disease investigators to follow up with cases
- Worked with schools on best practices and mitigation strategies throughout the year. Created the Schools Toolkit for what to do when experiencing symptoms, when to stay home from school, safety requirements of every Eau Claire County school for reducing COVID-19 transmission, and many other topics.
- Developed a local COVID-19 Prevention and Control order to provide specific guidance for individuals, public spaces, and private and public gatherings. This order was revised multiple times throughout the year based on public health science and available data.
- Starting in September 2020, partnered with 7 community organizations and distributed \$54,405 to promote testing and COVID-19 information in vulnerable populations in EC County. The grant work ended on December 31, 2020 and by then these organizations reached approximately 1,100 individuals and signed up 130 for testing appointments.
- Developed protocol for outbreak testing including a partnership with local EMS to provide on-site testing a site of potential outbreaks. 350 tests were done by EMS as part of this strategy; one outbreak included weekly tests for 13 weeks.
- Supported two Wisconsin National Guard testing sites, beginning in October 2020. The Augusta site performed 500 tests in 2020 and the Eau Claire regional site performed 4,399. National Guard staff also worked with the ECCCHD to provide testing for people experiencing incarceration.
- Provided hotel rooms for 125 cases or close contacts to safely complete isolation/quarantine.
- And much more.....

Timeline & Highlights



We are committed to creating a safe and healthy community for all the citizens of Eau Claire County. We are proud to share some of the progress that our county has made in 2020. Thank you for taking the time to read about the empowering and necessary work that our dedicated staff devote their time to each and every day.



Eau Claire City-County
Health Department

Full Annual Report and
Annual Report Summary
available at
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